

Why doesn't DFG encourage people to fish out the pike?

A question often asked of the Department is "Why isn't there a program designed to encourage people to fish for pike to help remove them from the lake?" Fishing for pike is one of the management tools recommended in the "Managing Pike in Lake Davis: A Plan for Y2000".

A common misconception is that intense fishing will eliminate a fish species. Extensive literature review has not revealed any instance of over-fishing totally eliminating a species, although it can severely deplete the numbers. The Department's goal is to find a solution to totally eliminate pike from California. Fishing could help reduce the numbers of pike but would not be the answer to eliminating them from the lake.

The Department has not discouraged fishing for pike but has informed individuals interested in fishing for pike that the opportunity to catch a pike is not great. Although there have been over 38,000 pike removed from Lake Davis from the years 2000 through 2003, about 93 percent of them have been less than 12" long. The number of pike over 24 inches long removed from the lake during the last 4 years is less than 300.

One of the concerns by the Department is that if there is an active program encouraging fishing for pike, a desire to have a pike fishery within California could be established. Many people suggest that having a pike fishery could generate monies for areas where pike are found. People from California spend considerable amounts of money to travel to Canada and other areas to specifically fish for pike. Unfortunately, the potential threat to other fisheries in California, and the revenues they generate, would far exceed revenues generated by a pike fishery.

Thus, although it is not illegal to fish for pike, it is illegal to keep a pike. If an angler catches a pike, the law states that they must kill the pike immediately and turn the carcass over to the Department of Fish and Game. If you catch a pike please call our office at (530) 832-9682 or CALTIP at 1-888-DFG-CALTip.

Catch a pike? Kill it and call 1-888-CALTip and leave a message, or call our office at (530) 832-9682. You can also turn the fish in to Grizzly Store at Lake Davis or Dollard's Sierra Market in Portola.